



County of Los Angeles
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DAVID E. JANSSEN
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April 5, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

SACRAMENTO UPDATE

AB 3632 Mental Health Services for Special Education

On April 4 and April 5, 2005, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Education, and Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education Finance, respectively, discussed the Governor's proposal to suspend the mandate for counties to provide AB 3632 mental health services to special education students. Several education groups, along with County representatives, testified in opposition to the Governor's proposal to suspend the mandate, and instead, argued that the program should be fully funded. Both subcommittees deferred action until after the release of the Governor's May Revision. However, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1 will also re-hear this issue at its April 18, 2005 hearing.

Pursuit of County Position on Legislation

SB 516 (Ortiz), as amended on March 29, 2005, would require residential care facilities for the elderly with six or fewer clients or residents, licensed as of January 1, 2007, to have an automatic fire sprinkler system by January 1, 2011. Facilities licensed on or after January 1, 2007 would be required to have an automatic fire sprinkler system on the date of licensure. The State Fire Marshal would be required to adopt regulations to implement these provisions by January 1, 2007.

Each Supervisor

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According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), residential fires account for more than 78 percent of all deaths from fire. NFPA studies also indicate that the residents in residential care facilities are five times more likely to die in a fire than the residents of a single family home. NFPA concludes that the combined protection of smoke detectors, alarms, and fire sprinklers could reduce the fire death rate in these settings by almost 82 percent.

The Fire Department indicates that most residential care facilities are not equipped with automatic fire sprinklers, including over 800 facilities within their jurisdiction. The Department estimates that the cost associated with installing fire sprinklers is about \$18 per square yard, which is equivalent to the cost of new carpeting. Because sprinklers would increase both public and firefighter safety by providing the time needed to safely evacuate a building or to protect those who cannot be evacuated. The Fire Department recommends that the County support SB 516, and we concur. Consistent with Board policy to support legislation to mandate or fund the installation of fire protection systems in new commercial, educational, and institutional facilities, **our Sacramento advocates will support SB 516.**

SB 516 is sponsored by the City of Torrance Fire Department and the City of Sacramento Fire Department; it is supported by over 50 fire departments throughout the State. Although there is no registered opposition, the author's staff indicates that it is likely to be opposed by Protection and Advocacy, Inc.

SB 516 is set for hearing on April 12, 2005 in the Senate Human Services Committee.

We will continue to keep you advised.

DEJ:GK

MAL:JF:MS:ib

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Local 660
All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist
Coalition of County Unions
California Contract Cities Association
Independent Cities Association
League of California Cities
City Managers Associations
Buddy Program Participants